

Message Text

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13

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 HEW-08

INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 PRS-01 RSC-01 SCA-01 SCSE-00

USIA-15 SWF-02 EB-12 AGR-20 SS-20 NSC-07 H-03 DRC-01

IGA-02 COME-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 /170 W

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R 012216Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8203

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 4192

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, SWEL, HO

SUBJ: COPEN PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 4144

1. THE PERMANENT NATIONAL EMERGENCY COMMITTEE (COPEN) GAVE A

PRESS CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 30 TO INFORM THE MEDIA OF COPEN'S

RELIEF ACTIVITY. ACCORDING TO TIEMPO VARIOUS MEMBERS OF
COPEN ISSUED SHORT STATEMENTS WHICH ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW.

2. THE PRESIDENT OF COPEN, COLONEL JOSE DE LA CRUZ HERNANDEZ

SAID THAT THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PND) WILL HAVE TO
AWAIT THE RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS CREATED BY HURRICANE
FIFI. HERNANDEZ RESPONDED TO JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS

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CONCERNING MISAPPROPRIATED SUPPLIES BY PROMISING SWIFT AND
SEVERE PUNISHMENT.

3. FORMER GOH AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S., ROBERTO GALVEZ BARNES, WHO HAS BEEN NAMED TO COORDINATE INCOMING AID, COMMENTED THAT ONLY A COORDINATED EFFORT, AVOIDING DUPLICATION, COULD SOLVE THE CURRENT MASSIVE PROBLEMS. HE APPLAUDED THE HELP PROVIDED BY THE OAS IN BRINGING ORDER TO THE CHAOS OF THE RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT. FINALLY, GALVEZ SAID THAT THE GREATEST CURRENT PROBLEM STANDING IN THE WAY OF RAPID DISTRIBUTION OF

RELIEF SUPPLIES IS A LACK OF CLASSIFICATION. FEW INCOMING SHIPMENTS ARE PROPERLY LABELLED OR CLASSIFIED AND MUCH VALUABLE TIME IS LOST IN CATALOGUING GOODS PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTION.

4. MARIO RIETTI, SERVING AS THE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE SPOKESMAN ON COPEN, ESTIMATED THAT TOTAL LOSSES WILL EXCEED \$500 MILLION. HE ALSO THOUGHT THAT 30-40,000 WORKERS ARE NOW UNEMPLOYED BECAUSE OF THE HURRICANE DAMAGE.

5. VICTOR ARTILES, SECRETARY GENERAL OF HONDURAS' LARGEST TRADE UNION FEDERATION (CTH), SPOKE OUT IN FAVOR OF THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND CAMPESINOS. HE URGED THAT THE GOH CARRY OUT A MASSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM THAT WILL IMMEDIATELY ALLOW THE CAMPESINOS TO BEGIN PLANTING.

6. RIGOBERTO ALVARADO, SUB-SECRETARY OF PUBLIC HEALTH, COMMENTED THAT THE GOH IMMUNIZATION CAMPAIGN THAT HAD BEEN UNDER WAY IN THE MONTHS BEFORE THE HURRICANE IS THE MAIN

REASON NO EPIDEMICS HAVE BROKEN OUT. HE ADDED THAT THE NUMEROUS REPORTS OF EPIDEMICS ARE ABSOLUTELY UNTRUE. SANCHEZ

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